



West Valley City
Neighborhood Services Office
Mission Statement:

The West Valley City
Neighborhood Services Office
strives to preserve, improve
and revitalize neighborhoods
by helping residents access
City services. An emphasis
is placed on partnerships
between residents, business
owners, elected officials
and City employees to build
and preserve clean, safe
neighborhoods that reflect
the diversity of the City's
population.



# Why have a block party?

Having neighborhood activities such as a block party can be one of the greatest tools a Neighborhood Watch group will use to build unity and strength. Neighborhood meetings are great places to discuss business and issues, but tend to be formal and less conducive to meeting new people. Neighborhood activities can give neighbors a chance to meet one another in a relaxed setting. This handbook will help you start thinking about why your group should have a neighborhood activity.

## SIX REASONS TO HAVE REGULAR BLOCK PARTIES

- 1. SAFETY You and your neighbors can actually increase the safety of your neighborhood just by getting to know each other. You can exchange telephone numbers and keep an eye on each other's property. You may also want to join the Neighborhood Watch program, if you have not already done so, which is a great way to reduce crime in your neighborhood.
- 2. ADDRESSING ISSUES Block Parties allow for neighbors to come together and address key issues in their neighborhood that need to be attended to. By working together, your group can successfully take care of problems that are affecting the neighborhood.
- 3. SHARING WITH NEIGHBORS Your neighbors have a wealth of knowledge that they may be able to share with you. We can all learn from each other by connecting with each other. We are creating an exciting opportunity to learn something new! By getting together with your neighbors, you are creating a sense of belonging in your neighborhood, which is an important aspect of building safe and positive communities.
- 4. BEAUTIFICATION Neighbors in West Valley City have a wonderful opportunity to participate in the beautification of their City. Neighborhood beautification projects can be performed individually or you can gather your neighbors together to adopt a local area or park for a beautification program. Contact the Parks Department at (801) 955-3715 for more information.
  - You can also organize a neighborhood clean up by contacting the Public Works Department and making arrangements to have garbage dumpsters delivered to your neighborhood. Contact the Sanitation Division at (801) 955-3723 for more information.
- 5. FUN Having fun in your street and at local parks is a wonderful experience that children and adults will enjoy and hopefully create lasting memories. Playing games such as road hockey or frisbee together can help break down barriers and build lasting friendships.
- **6. HARMONY** By having a Block Party, you and your neighbors can help to reduce conflict in your neighborhood. If there is a difficult situation brewing, you can successfully deal with the situation as a group. By providing an opportunity for communication, you are on the path to a resolution to the problem.



#### START PLANNING EARLY

Your neighborhood organization should start thinking about dates, activities and supplies a couple of months, or on shorter notice, a couple weeks ahead. Start by enlisting the help of neighbors. Find out how they can help and what they can supply. Try to involve as many people as possible, and make sure everyone stays in touch with one another.

Neighborhood events can be held in backyards, neighborhood parks or on the street. You can make your block party just about any shape or size. Successful block party planners will invite the whole neighborhood. Activities could include live music, helium balloons, face painting and lots of food. Other popular activities include sporting events like softball, volleyball, basketball, flag football games or tournaments. Tug-of-wars, water balloon tosses, egg tosses and relay races allow for participants of all ages. Some neighborhoods choose to have cook-offs, cookouts, BBQs or pot luck dinners. Visits from police and fire departments, parades, flashlight walks, contests and watermelon busts are also popular.

Some people will come in response to fliers and posters, others in response to the sounds and smells of the event itself. Block parties can be themed -- wrap up a block cleanup or service project or get together after a block garage sale -- there are many reasons to have an activity.

Whatever the nature of your first activity, the next will be much easier to organize. For some neighborhoods, activities become important annual events. Whatever you do, be sure to include everyone. If you have businesses near your neighborhood, be sure to include them as well -- they may even be interested in helping to sponsor the event.

## THE BASICS

Gather a few neighbors together who are interested in organizing your event. Think of the planning process itself as an opportunity to have fun and make some lasting friendships. Try to involve neighbors you do not know well and who know other neighbors you do not know well. Most important, do not stress over planning the perfect party -- sometimes the most casual events are the most fun. If there are people in your neighborhood who speak a language other than English, try to find a translator who can help you to reach these neighbors. This will help to bridge the language barrier. This is a great opportunity to meet people of different cultures and backgrounds!

- 1. WHEN When choosing a date, try to look ahead 4-6 weeks in advance to allow plenty of time for planning, notifying neighbors and obtaining a permit (if needed). When deciding a time, take into consideration your neighbors schedules. In general, mid afternoon and evenings work best for most people, especially on a weekend or holiday. Respect your neighbors -- try to keep the noise down after 10:00 at night.
- 2. WHERE Choose a location that makes sense for your neighborhood. You may be able to close off the street in front of your block if you want to hold activities right in the street. If you want to close a street, you will need to get a free Street Closure Request from the West Valley City Neighborhood Services office. If you want to hold the party in yards and don't want to close a street, the City does not require permits. Despite the permit requirements, closing a street does have the advantage of making your party feel like a true block party rather than a private event. In case of stormy weather you may want to consider an alternative location may also want to be considered as a back up.
- 3. MENU A party simply isn't a party without food! All the other activities you plan may take a back seat to the food. Invite your neighbors to bring a favorite dish, drinks, desserts, etc. Just because you're planning the event does not mean you need to provide all the food.



## **TIPS**

PARKS - If you want to hold your party at a local park, you might need to reserve it. Call (801) 955-4000 to find out if your park requires a reservation.

STREETS - If you want to close the street, you **MUST** complete a West Valley City Street Closure Request and obtain the approval of impacted neighbors. This form is available online at www.wvc-ut.gov/nw under "Forms and Handouts."



- 4. ACTIVITIES You may want to include some games and activities. Some block parties come at the end of a block cleanup, a block garage sale, or a day of tree-planting; others have a theme such as National Night Out Against Crime, the Fourth of July or celebrating some real (or made up) neighborhood anniversary.
- 5. INVITATIONS Hand out invitations with all the appropriate information to your neighbors. You can have free copies made at West Valley City's Neighborhood Services Office. A couple of days before the event, put up posters in your neighborhood to remind everyone that the Party is coming!

## **EVENT SET-UP**

- ARRIVAL Plan this for approximately one hour. Have everyone make their own name-tags and have an informal activity and/or duty for all. Duties could include:
  - assisting at the name tag table
  - coordinating each activity area
  - organizing food table
  - setting up BBQs
  - setting up the seating/picnic area
  - acting as hosts to introduce both adults and children
- 2. SET-UP Have the areas for food, seating, music, games, little ones, etc. designated before your neighbors arrive. You may want to put signs out designating the areas. Place garbage containers in strategic locations. If you will be closing a street, you will need to turn in a request form and follow the directions to pick up barricades.
- 3. PARTY SCHEDULE After everyone has arrived, announce the day's events and any housekeeping items you need to share. Often mealtime follows announcements, then your planned activities and/or speaker. The latter half of the party is often informal visiting amongst neighbors until cleanup and take down. Observe neighborhood courtesies. Remember to make your block party a positive experience for all of your neighbors, even if they choose not to attend. Make it easy for neighbors to get out of their driveways and through the streets. Keep noise levels low. End the party by 10:00 p.m.
- 4. CITY RESOURCES The City is your neighbor, and we'd like to be invited to your party too! Police officers who patrol your neighborhood always enjoy stopping by just to say hello, and to let kids have their pictures taken with a police car. The City can also provide speakers on a wide variety of topics, from open space to the arts to emergency planning. If you have a request for your event, please ask. We may be able to find the resources you are looking for.

The most important thing is for everyone, no matter what age, to feel welcome and a part of the neighborhood and the party. The name-tags help. You may want to consider putting the parents' names on the bottoms of children's nametags. If a neighborhood member cannot attend because he or she is bedridden, select small delegations to bring in food and conversation.



## **ACTIVITY IDEAS**

## **Suggestions for Informal Activities:**

- fill out a questionnaire about issues of interest, stories they may want to share, other neighborhood activities, book club, shared cooking, etc.
- · help to decorate the area
- have a craft table for children
- · fill out a quiz about the neighborhood or any fun trivia

## **Activities for the Young-at-Heart:**

- Street hockey, street soccer, basketball, volleyball, badminton,
   3-legged race, etc
- Cardboard box-castle construction for the very young to build, play in, paint and explore (Check out appliance stores for boxes that can be donated!)
- A bike decoration contest
- Face painting and/or balloons
- A magician or clown
- Story telling for the very young
- · A treasure hunt

#### **Activities for Adults and Teens**

- · Free Book Exchange Table
- Ideas Exchange Table for suggestions about improving life on the block (e.g. ideas for a walking group, sketching group or study circle)
- A "Needs" and "Wants" Table where teens can find employment, (e.g. baby sitting, lawn care and gardening services, dogwalking, shopping services)
- A History Table with a display of the block from years gone by, remembering former neighbors and celebrating new ones.
- An Emergency Preparedness Table with information about Neighborhood Watch, Earthquake preparedness, etc.
- A Plant Exchange Table where neighbors can bring seedlings from their gardens to swap.
- Consider holding an evening street dance -- a country dance with a fiddler and caller, straw on the road and straw bales to sit on; or a swing dance and street ballroom dancing. Atmosphere after dark is important. Consider stringing Christmas lights around the perimeter of the party, and candles for the tables.

#### **NATIONAL NIGHT OUT**



Participation in this program has brought national recognition to the City and has proven to be a positive and enjoyable way to meet neighbors and strengthen neighborhoods.

National Night Out is traditionally held on the first Tuesday in August. West Valley City also provides several opportunities for the public to learn more about crime prevention by hosting a kick off event and concert the night before as well as safety fairs and training workshops throughout the month of August.

National Night Out is designed to:

- Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness.
- Generate support for, and participation in, local anti-crime programs.
- Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships.
- Send a message to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

Along with the traditional display of outdoor lights and front porch vigils, West Valley City neighborhoods celebrate National Night Out with a variety of events and activities, such as:

- Block parties
- Cookouts
- Visits from Police, Fire and City officials
- Parades
- · Bike rodeos
- Concerts
- Contests
- · Safety Fairs

National Night Out has proven to be an effective, inexpensive and enjoyable program to promote neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships in our fight for a safer community.

To get registered with West Valley City or for more information, please contact the Neighborhood Services Office or visit www.wvc-ut.gov/nno.

You can also get more information about National Night Out by visiting the National Association of Town Watch website at www.natw.org.



#### **MORE HELPFUL TIPS**

## **Grilling Tips**

- Make sure your grill is clean. Clean with a wire brush or use a big wad of crumpled up aluminum foil.
- Start early. Charcoal briquettes will need 20-45 minutes before they are hot enough to cook over (about 75% white). A gas grill's lava rocks will need about 10-15 minutes to preheat.
- If you use lighter fluid, let it soak into the briquettes before lighting the grill. Never add more lighter fluid once the fire is burning.
- If a barbecue recipe calls for direct heat, it means the food is cooked directly over the heat source. Direct heat is good for cooking thinner foods such as fish, beef, lamb, pork and vegetables. If the recipe calls for indirect heat, this means the food is cooked off to the side of the heat source. Indirect heat is better for cooking poultry, larger cuts of meat, anything that requires longer, slower cooking. The heat surrounds the food and cooks it through without burning the outside.
- Many people prefer to clean up while the grill is warm so that stuck food comes off more easily.

## Food Safety Tips

- Poultry must be cooked thoroughly to be safe to eat. Cook poultry slowly and turn frequently. If it is convenient, poultry may be precooked in the oven, then finished on the grill. Grill poultry until internal temperature reaches 170 degrees in the breast or 185 degrees in the thigh.
- When grilling kabobs, remember that wood burns. Soak wooden skewers in water before threading on food.
- Don't save and reuse marinades. Discard and make a fresh batch for additional food. Also, stop basting foods with marinades at least 5 minutes before cooking time is done to help insure that bacteria are destroyed.
- Avoid bacteria-friendly temperatures. Bacteria thrive at temperatures between 40 and 140 degrees F. Thaw and marinate food in the refrigerator, not on a counter top. Perishable foods should be chilled thoroughly and served surrounded by ice or frozen gel packs to maintain safe food temperatures.

#### SAMPLE MENU

If you want to have a good party, you have got to have food!

Here are three ways to organize your food:

- Pot luck. Every household is assigned to bring one dish. It can be an appetizer, salad, main dish, side dish, dessert or beverage. When organizing a pot luck, keep a master list of food assignments. You will also need to keep track of the number of neighbors attending the party and the varieties of food dishes. Pot luck meals offer the greatest variety of dishes.
- Community menu. Like a dinner club, you may want to plan
  a menu and assign each household a specific food dish or
  beverage. It is a good idea to share the menu and recipes with
  your neighbors in advance. This method of organizing food
  works really well when planning a theme party.
- Find a sponsor. Finding a sponsor to help with providing hot dogs, hamburgers or other meat frees up neighbors to bring other items. Assign several neighbors with grills to bring them and cook for the group.
- Cater it. Take up a collection and cater your party. Once you
  know how many neighbors to expect and how much you want
  to spend per person, all you have to do is place your order.
  The professionals do the rest.

## **Appetizers**

- Guacamole and chips
- Seven layer bean dip

#### Salads

- · Black eyed cabbage salad
- Pasta salad
- Potato salad
- Tossed green salad

#### Main Dishes

- BBQ chicken
- Hamburgers
- Hot Dogs

#### Side Dishes

- Corn on the cob
- · Grilled vegetables
- Baked beans
- · Garlic bread

#### Desserts

- Apple crisp
- Chocolate chip cookies
- Watermelon



#### SIMPLE BBQ SAUCE

1/2 (1 ounce) package dry onion soup mix1/2 cup packed brown sugar2 cups ketchup1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

In a medium bowl, mix together onion soup mix, sugar, ketchup and Worcestershire sauce. Do not use until the last few minutes of cooking, because this sweet sauce will burn if cooked for too long or over too high heat.

#### **BBQ SAUCE**

2 cups ketchup

2 cups tomato sauce

1 1/4 cups brown sugar

1 1/4 cups red wine vinegar

1/2 cup unsulfured molasses

4 teaspoons hickory-flavored liquid smoke

2 tablespoons butter

1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

1/2 teaspoon onion powder

1/4 teaspoon chili powder

1 teaspoon paprika

1/2 teaspoon celery seed

1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper

In a large saucepan over medium heat, mix together the ketchup, tomato sauce, brown sugar, wine vinegar, molasses, liquid smoke and butter. Season with garlic powder, onion powder, chili powder, paprika, celery seed, cinnamon, cayenne, salt and pepper.

Reduce heat to low, and simmer for up to 20 minutes. For thicker sauce, simmer longer; for thinner sauce, less time is needed. Sauce can also be thinned using a bit of water if necessary. Brush sauce onto any kind of meat during the last 10 minutes of cooking.

## **MOJO GRILLING MARINADE**

6 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped

1/2 cup minced yellow onion

1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice

1/2 cup freshly squeezed lime juice

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon dried oregano flakes

1/2 teaspoon lemon-pepper seasoning

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon kosher salt

1/4 cup chopped cilantro

1 teaspoon hot pepper sauce (e.g. Tabasco™) (optional)

1 cup olive oil

Pulse the garlic and onion in a blender until very finely chopped. Pour in orange juice and lime juice; season with cumin, oregano, lemon-pepper, black pepper, salt, cilantro and hot pepper sauce. Blend until thoroughly incorporated. Pour in the olive oil and blend until smooth.

#### **MARINATED MEDITERRANEAN SALAD**

2 large tomatoes, cut into wedges

1 medium onion, thinly sliced

3/4 cup Italian salad dressing, divided

1/2 cup slivered fresh basil leaves or 1 tablespoon dried basil leaves

1/2 cup sliced pitted ripe olives

1 (12 ounce) package Ronzoni Garden Delight Rotini, Radiatore or Penne, uncooked

1/2 pound cubed mozzarella cheese

In large bowl, stir together tomatoes, onion, 1/2 cup salad dressing, basil and olives. Meanwhile, cook pasta according to package directions; drain. Rinse with cold water to cool quickly; drain well.

In large bowl, toss marinated vegetables, cooled pasta, remaining salad dressing and mozzarella cheese. Cover; refrigerate before serving.



## **POTATO SALAD**

5 pounds potatoes, peeled and chopped

10 eggs

1 large onion, chopped

1 (24 ounce) jar sweet pickles, drained and chopped

2 cups mayonnaise

Place the potatoes in a large pan of water and boil over mediumlow heat until tender, about 12 minutes. Drain the potatoes and place in the refrigerator to cool.

Place the eggs in a saucepan of cold water over medium heat and bring to a full boil. Turn off the heat, cover the pan and allow the eggs to sit in the hot water for about 15 minutes. Cool the eggs thoroughly under cold running water and shell them. Chop the cooled eggs and place them in a large salad bowl.

Stir the onion, sweet pickles and mayonnaise into the eggs and let the mixture chill in the refrigerator at least 1/2 hour to blend the flavors. Mix in the chilled chopped potatoes and refrigerate for at least 1/2 hour. Serve cold.

## **3 BEAN SALAD**

1 15-oz can cannellini beans, rinsed and drained

1 15-oz can kidney beans, rinsed and drained

1 15-oz can garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained

2 celery stalks, chopped fine

1/2 red onion, chopped fine

1 cup fresh, finely chopped flat-leaf parsley

1 Tbsp fresh finely chopped rosemary

1/3 cup apple cider vinegar

1/3 cup granulated sugar

1/4 cup olive oil

1 1/2 teaspoons salt

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

In a large bowl, mix the beans, celery, onion, parsley and rosemary. In a separate small bowl, whisk together the vinegar, sugar, olive oil, salt and pepper. Add the dressing to the beans. Toss to coat. Chill beans in the refrigerator for several hours to allow the beans to soak up the flavor of the dressing.

#### LAYERED BEAN DIP

1 (10-12 oz) can jalapeno dip

1 (6-8 oz) container frozen avocado dip, thawed

1 cup (8 oz) sour cream

1 cup (4 oz) shredded Cheddar cheese

1 cup (4 oz) shredded Monterrey Jack

1 cup green onions, chopped (plus more for garnish)

1 can (5 oz) sliced black ripe olives, drained

Spanish paprika

This can be served either in a large straight sides glass pudding dish or on a 14 inch serving platter. If using a pudding dish, simply spread the layers so that the colorful layers can be easily seen. If using a serving platter, pile the layers of ingredients one over another with each successive ingredient leaving a margin of 3/4-inch in a pyramid fashion.

For the first layer, spread bean dip to 1/2-inch thickness. Over this, evenly spread a layer of avocado dip to the same thickness (but if using a serving platter, leave a 3/4-inch margin so the bean dish may be seen, and so on.) Next, spread a 1/2-inch thick layer of sour cream (leave a 3/4-inch layer). Layer the remaining ingredients in the same fashion.

Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for several hours before serving. Sprinkle center lightly with paprika for added color. Garnish with green onions. Serve with tortilla chips, crackers and crisp vegetable strips.



## **APPLE CRISP**

10 cups all-purpose apples -- peeled, cored and sliced 1 cup white sugar 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon 1/2 cup water

1 cup quick-cooking oats 1 cup all-purpose flour 1 cup packed brown sugar 1/4 teaspoon baking powder 1/4 teaspoon baking soda 1/2 cup butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degree C).

Place the sliced apples in a 9x13 inch pan. Mix the white sugar, 1 tablespoon flour and ground cinnamon together, and sprinkle over apples. Pour water evenly over all.

Combine the oats, 1 cup flour, brown sugar, baking powder, baking soda and melted butter together. Crumble evenly over the apple mixture.

Bake at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for about 45 minutes.

#### CHOCOLATE OATMEAL NO-BAKE COOKIES

2 cups sugar
1/2 cup cocoa
1 stick butter
1/2 cup milk
1 tsp. vanilla
3 cups quick-cooking oatmeal
1/2 cup peanut butter

Combine sugar, cocoa, butter and milk in a saucepan. On medium heat, bring to a boil for one full minute. Remove from heat. Stir in peanut butter (optional), vanilla and oatmeal.

Drop by spoonful onto wax paper. Let cool for at least 30 minutes.

#### SAMPLE GAME

# Getting to know you...

Find one person to sign each of the blanks below. Each person may sign only ONCE on this paper. Have fun finding out wacky, wild things about each other.

## FIND SOMEONE WHO...

1.	Has two cats
2.	Has been to a concert at the Maverik Center
3.	Has lived in 10 or more homes
4.	Is a twin
5.	Can role his/her tongue
6.	Was born outside the US
7.	Has met a famous person
8.	Is taller than both parents
9.	Has more than one computer
10.	Has bungee jumped
11.	Can fox trot
	Wears contacts
	Has been to Disneyland in the last year
14.	Owns an Elvis record
15.	Wore a poodle skirt to school
16.	Has dyed his/her hair
17.	Was a cheerleader in high school
18.	Has written a poem
19.	Has flown a plane
20.	Can do a flip on a trampoline
21.	The first letter of their first name and last
	name are the same
22.	Is double jointed
23.	Can do a one handed cartwheel
24.	Has been or currently is in the military
25.	Has lived in West Valley City their whole life
26.	Has more than four children
27.	Speaks a foreign language





Promoting community pride, beautification, and improved quality of life in West Valley City.

www.wvc-ut.gov/c&b

Victim Services	(801) 963-3223
Harman Senior Recreation Center	(801) 965-5822
Neighborhood Services	(801) 963-3562
Code Enforcement	(801) 963-3289
Graffiti Hotline	(801) 963-3467
Animal Services	(801) 965-5800
Business Licensing	(801) 963-3290
Garbage Collection - Waste Management	(888) 496-8824
Streets and Snow Removal	(801) 955-3720
Street Lights and Signs	(801) 955-3720
Family Fitness Center	(801) 955-4000
City Parks	(801) 955-4000
Building Inspections	(801) 963-3283
Housing Authority	(801) 963-3320
Planning and Zoning	(801) 963-3312
Utah Cultural Celebration Center	(801) 955-5100

Tip-A-Cop Hotline (801) 963-3459
POLICE AND FIRE EMERGENCY 9 1 1
Non-Emergency Dispatch (801) 840-4000

West Valley City Hall - 3600 Constitution Boulevard - West Valley City, Utah 84119

(801) 966-3600 | www.wvc-ut.





West Valley City Police Department Community Services Division 3575 South Market Street West Valley City, Utah 84119

www.wvc-ut.gov/police



West Valley City
Public Relations &
Neighborhood Services Division
3600 Constitution Boulevard
West Valley City, Utah 84119

(801) 963-3562 neighborhoods@wvc-ut.gov www.wvc-ut.gov/neighborhoods